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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1542
INFO RUEHKK/ALL NATO CAPITALS
RUSBLK/AMEMBASSY KABUL 0618
RUENMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 6423
RUEHBC/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 6109
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S E C R E T SECTION #1 OF 06 USNATO 25615

E.O.12865: RDS-1 08/08/89 (GLITMAN, MATNARD) OR-P
TAGS: PINS, AF, NATO
SUBJECT: POLADS DISCUSSION OF AFGHANISTAN (5)

REF: (A) STATE 282431 (NOTAL), (B) STATE 284724

1. (S - ENTIRE TEXT)

2. AT AUGUST 7 POLITICAL COMMITTEE MEETING, U.K., FRG, CANADA AND TURKEY SUBMITTED WRITTEN CONTRIBUTIONS ON AFGHANISTAN SITUATION. TEXTS ARE TRANSMITTED PARA 6. U.K. REP WHO HAD SUGGESTED EXCHANGE ON AFGHANISTAN EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR CONTRIBUTIONS AND RECOMMENDED THAT POLADS, IN VIEW OF THE DEVELOPING SITUATION, DISCUSS SUBJECT AT NEXT MEETING AS WELL. THIS WAS AGREED.

3. U.S. REP UNDERLINED PER REF A WASHINGTON INTEREST IN ALLIED ASSESSMENT OF SOVIET INTENTIONS IN AFGHANISTAN (WRITTEN CONTRIBUTIONS ADDRESS THIS SUBJECT IN PART). AND SAID THERE SHOULD BE A CONTINUING EXCHANGE ON THIS WITHIN THE COMMITTEE. CANADIAN REP, IN RESPONSE TO U.S. DESCRIPTION OF SUCCESSFUL EVACUATION OF U.S. DEPENDENTS AND NON-ESSENTIAL PERSONNEL FROM KABUL, SAID THAT CANADIANS TOO WERE "INTERESTED" IN EVACUATION ISSUE. HE WENT ON TO NOTE OTTAWA'S VIEW THAT REBEL MOVEMENT WOULD REMAIN FRAGMENTED AND INEFFECTIVE UNTIL A SINGLE ANTI-TAKARI LEADER EMERGED WHICH HAS NOT BEEN THE CASE TO DATE. CANADIAN REP ASKED FOR ANY VIEWS OR INFORMATION OTHERS MIGHT HAVE ON THIS ASPECT.

4. ITALIAN REQUESTED THAT AUGUST 5 COUP BE THE SUBJECT OF FURTHER DISCUSSION AT NEXT POLADS MEETING. FRG REP SAID HIS AUTHORITIES WERE NOT SURE WHETHER RECENT GOVERN-

MENT RESHUFFLE WAS DUE TO DESIRE TO IMPROVE EFFICIENCY
OR WAS DIRECTED AGAINST A POSSIBLE USSR INTERNAL "PLOT".

5. ACTION REQUESTED: NEXT POLADS MEETING WILL BE AUGUST
21. WE WOULD APPRECIATE NLT OOB AUGUST 21 ANY WASHINGTON
COMMENTS ON THE ALLIED PAPERS AND THE VARIOUS POINTS
RAISED ORALLY.

6. BEGIN TEXTS OF ALLIED PAPERS:

BEGIN TEXT OF CANADIAN DELEGATION PAPER:

SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN

INTERNAL OPPOSITION

1. THE TRIBAL OPPOSITION MOVEMENT IS SLOWLY BUT STEADILY
INCREASING IN AFGHANISTAN. ALTHOUGH THE GOVERNMENT CON-
TINUES TO RETAIN CONTROL OF THE MAJOR URBAN CENTRES AND
THE MAIN ROAD NETWORK, IT HAS SURRENDERED ITS AUTHORITY IN
THE COUNTRYSIDE.

2. ALTHOUGH ARMED OPPOSITION IS INCREASING, IT CONTINUES
TO BE FRAGMENTED WITH LITTLE READILY APPARENT PROSPECT
OF MERGING INTO A COHESIVE FORCE. IT HAS NOT YET DEVELOPED
THE CAPACITY FOR SUSTAINED CO-ORDINATED MILITARY QUESTIONS
SUFFICIENT TO KNOCK OUT THE FARAKI REGIME. DESPITE AN
ELEMENT OF DISLOYALTY IN THE ARMED FORCES AND PROBLEMS
OF ARMS AND EQUIPMENT SHORTAGES, THE GOVERNMENT SEEMS
ABLE TO MAINTAIN ITSELF IN THE URBAN CENTRES WHICH ARE
VITAL TO ITS EXISTENCE.

PAKISTAN-AFGHANISTAN RELATIONS

3. PAKISTAN CONTINUES TO RECEIVE AND TO HELP SUSTAIN
AFGHANISTAN REFUGEES WHILE AT THE SAME TIME DOING ITS
BEST TO LIMIT THE REFUGEES' POLITICAL/MILITARY ACTIVITIES.
THE PAKISTAN ATTEMPTS IN THIS AREA MIGHT BE BEARING SOME
FRUIT IN THAT THE USSR REPRESENTATIVES AND TASS HAVE IN
THE PAST TWO WEEKS BEEN DROPPING VERBAL BOMBS ABOUT
PAKISTAN AND PAKISTAN/USSR RELATIONS. WE SAY MIGHT BE
CAUSE SUCH ACTIVITIES COULD BE INSPIRED BY SOMETHING OTHER
THAN EVENTS IN AFGHANISTAN, I.E. TO MAKE INROADS IN
CHINA'S COMPARATIVELY FAVOURED POSITION IN PAKISTAN.

4. THE RECENT REDUCTION IN AFGHANISTAN AND SOVIET ACCU-
SATIONS OF PAKISTAN'S COMNIVANCE WITH THE REBEL FORCES
THROUGH THE ACTIVE SUPPORT OF REFUGEE AGITATORS MAY BE
EASING ONE ASPECT OF BORDER TENSIONS. NEVERTHELESS, AN
ESTIMATED 125,000 REFUGEES IN CAMPS AS WELL AS THOUSANDS
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OF OTHER AFGHANISTAN REFUGEES RESIDING WITH BORDER AREA
 KINSFOLK, IS A DRAIN ON PAKISTAN'S PATIENCE AND RESOURCES.
 PAKISTAN'S OBSESSION WITH THE SOVIET PRESENCE AND INFLU-
 ENCE WITHIN AFGHANISTAN IS UNPREDICTABLE AND A FACTOR CON-
 TRIBUTING TO THE POTENTIAL FOR INSTABILITY IN THE AREA.
 THE IRRATIONAL ELEMENTS IN THE PAKISTANI FOREIGN POLICY,
 INCLUDING ITS "ISLAMIC" DIMENSION, ALSO PLAY A PART.
 SOVIET ROLE

5. IT WOULD APPEAR THAT AS FAR AS THE SOVIET POSITION
 IS CONCERNED LITTLE HAS CHANGED IN THE LAST TWO MONTHS.

6. WHILE THERE HAVE BEEN PERSISTENT RUMOURS THAT THE
 SOVIETS WOULD BE PREPARED TO DROP THE TARAKI LEADERSHIP
 IN FAVOUR OF A GROUP WHO MIGHT BE MORE ACCEPTABLE TO THE
 AFGHANISTAN MASSES, THERE HAS BEEN NO HARD EVIDENCE TO
 SUPPORT THIS ASSERTION. INDEED, THE FOREMOST SOVIET OB-
 JECTIVE MUST BE TO KEEP AFGHANISTAN CLOSELY UNDER THE
 SOVIET THUMB AS ANY CHANGE IN POWER WITHIN THE COUNTRY
 SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO INTERFERE WITH THE "NEW LEVEL"
 OF SOVIET/AFGHANISTAN RELATIONS. AT THE MOMENT, THEREFORE,
 IT WOULD APPEAR THAT THE SOVIETS HAVE DEFINITELY DECIDED
 TO CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THE PRESENT REGIME UP TO A POINT
 SHORT OF DIRECT INTERVENTION WHILE AT THE SAME TIME, THEY
 MAY BE CASTING ABOUT FOR NEW LEADERSHIP WHEREBY THEY CAN
 MAINTAIN THEIR ACTIVE PRESENCE WHILE OFFERING A MORE
 PALATABLE GOVERNMENT TO THE AFGHAN PEOPLE.

CONCLUSION

7. THE CALL OF AFGHAN MULLAHS FOR A "JINAD" AGAINST THE
 TARAKI/AMIN REGIME HAS NOT LED TO THE EMERGENCE OF ONE
 LEADER FROM WITHIN THE GUERRILLA RANKS. WE HAVE NO EVID-
 DENCE THAT ONE WILL APPEAR, AND SO LONG AS THE OPPOSITION
 REMAINS DISORGANIZED THE STRUGGLE APPEARS BOUND TO BE
 PROTRACTED.
 END TEXT.

BEGIN TEXT OF FRG PAPER:

SUBJECT: AFGHANISTAN; COMMENTS ON THE SOVIET ENGAGEMENT

1. AFGHANISTAN'S INTERNAL SECURITY SITUATION IS RAPIDLY WORSENING. THE PRO-MOSCOW TARAKI REGIME IS APPARENTLY FACING DIFFICULTIES. IN SPITE OF MASSIVE MILITARY SUPPORT BY THE SOVIETS IN THE FORM OF LARGE-SCALE DELIVERIES OF WEAPONS AND THE USE OF BETWEEN 3,000 AND 3,500 MILITARY ADVISERS - SOME OF THEM IN LEADING POSITIONS - THE AFGHAN CENTRAL GOVERNMENT HAS SO FAR BEEN UNABLE TO BREAK THE PREDOMINANTLY RELIGIOUSLY-MOTIVATED RESISTANCE OF LARGE PARTS OF THE POPULATION. ON THE CONTRARY, THE RESISTANCE GROUPS ARE ACHIEVING GROWING SUCCESSES. WITHOUT SOVIET SUPPORT, THE REGIME WOULD PROBABLY HAVE FALLEN A LONG TIME AGO.

2. AS FAR AS THE SOVIET LEADERSHIP IS CONCERNED, THIS MEANS THAT IT WILL SOON BE OBLIGED TO TAKE A DECISION CONCERNING ITS FUTURE ENGAGEMENT IN AFGHANISTAN.

3. IT CAN PROBABLY BE RULED OUT THAT MOSCOW WILL DROP THE PRESENT REGIME SINCE THIS MIGHT MEAN THE LOSS OF AN IMPORTANT ZONE OF INTEREST FOR THE SOVIETS, BECAUSE - BY WINNING AFGHANISTAN - THE DISTANCE SEPARATING THEM FROM THEIR GEOSTRATEGIC AIM, THE INDIAN OCEAN, HAS SHRUNK TO 300 KMS. IF AFGHANISTAN WERE TO RETURN TO A MORE OR LESS ISLAMIC STATE, MOSCOW WOULD IN ALL PROBABILITY HAVE AN ANTI-SOVIET NEIGHBOUR. APART FROM SUCH A POLITICAL SET-BACK, IMPLICATIONS ON OTHER SOVIET ZONES OF INFLUENCE AND THE MUSLIM ELEMENTS IN THE SOVIET POPULATION COULD NOT BE EXCLUDED.

4. THE POSSIBLE REPLACEMENT OF THE PRESENT RULERS IN KABUL BY A GOVERNMENT WHICH APPEARS IN A LESS PRO-MOSCOW LIGHT TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD - THIS IS WHAT THE SOVIETS ARE APPARENTLY TRYING TO DO AT THE PRESENT TIME - WOULD HARDLY HAVE AN INFLUENCE ON THE RESISTANCE MOVEMENT. THEY ARE FIGHTING NOT SO MUCH AGAINST THE MEMBERS OF THE PRESENT REGIME BUT AGAINST THE COMMUNIST IDEOLOGY WHICH, FOR THEM, IS PRIMARILY REPRESENTED BY THE SOVIET PRESENCE IN THE COUNTRY.

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INFO RUEHKK/ALL NATO CAPITALS

RUSBLK/AMEMBASSY KABUL 0020

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5. THEREFORE, IF MOSCOW WANTS TO MAINTAIN ITS PRESENT POSITION, IT MUST REINFORCE ITS COMMITMENT EVEN FURTHER. THE SOVIET PRESS HAS RECENTLY INDICATED THAT THE ACTIVE USE OF SOVIET TROOPS IN SUPPORT OF THE TAZAKI REGIME MIGHT BE CONSIDERED. ACCORDING TO ARTICLE 4 OF THE FRIENDSHIP TREATY BETWEEN THE SOVIET UNION AND AFGHANISTAN, THE SOVIET UNION WOULD BE ENTITLED - AFTER MUTUAL CONSULTATIONS - TO TAKE ACTION TO MAINTAIN THE SECURITY, INDEPENDENCE AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF AFGHANISTAN. THIS COULD BE PREPARED POLITICALLY AND PSYCHOLOGICALLY BY PUBLICATIONS IN THE SOVIET AND AFGHAN PRESS ON THE SUPPORT OF "REBELS" AND THE AGGRESSION BY PAKISTAN. FOR THE FIRST TIME, AFGHANISTAN IS DESCRIBED IN THE SOVIET PRESS AS A MEMBER OF THE SOCIALIST COMMUNITY, WHICH WOULD MAKE HER SUBJECT TO THE BREZHNEV DOCTRINE.

6. HOWEVER, IT APPEARS DOUBTFUL WHETHER THE SOVIET UNION WILL STEP UP HER ENGAGEMENT TO THE LEVEL OF MILITARY INTERVENTION SINCE THIS WOULD LEAD TO SERIOUS RISKS. FIRST OF ALL, SUCH A STEP WOULD BE BOUND TO PROVOKE NEGATIVE REACTIONS, ESPECIALLY ON THE PART OF THE ARAB AND ISLAMIC WORLD, BUT MOSCOW MIGHT STILL BE PREPARED TO RUN THAT RISK.

7. MORE SERIOUS, HOWEVER, WOULD BE THE RESISTANCE TO BE EXPECTED FROM THE AFGHAN POPULATION AND THE RESULTING CONSEQUENCES FOR THE SOVIETS. THE AFGHAN POPULATION REGARDS NOTHING AS MORE IMPORTANT THAN ITS FREEDOM; UP TO NOW IT HAS BEEN ABLE TO DEFEND ITSELF AGAINST ALL FOREIGN CLAIMS OF SUPREMACY AND HAS NEVER BEEN FORCED UNDER ANY FORM OF COLONIAL RULE. IN CASE OF A SOVIET INTERVENTION, THE POPULATION IS LIKELY TO IGNORE ALL THE EXISTING TRIBAL

QUARRERS AND TO RISE AS ONE MAN AGAINST THE SOVIET INVADERS.

8. IT APPEARS QUESTIONABLE WHETHER THE SOVIETS WOULD BE ABLE TO OVERCOME THIS RESISTANCE. THE INACCESSIBILITY OF THE TERRAIN - 80 OF AFGHANISTAN ARE COVERED BY MOUNTAIN COUNTRY WITHOUT ROADS AND ARE FAVOURABLE FOR GUERRILLAS - THE MENTALITY OF THE WARLIKE MOUNTAIN TRIBES AND THEIR FORM OF WARFARE MAKE THIS UNLIKELY. IT MUST BE ASSUMED THAT AN INTERVENTION WOULD LEAD TO A PROTRACTED GUERRILLA WAR WHOSE OUTCOME WOULD BE COMPLETELY UNCERTAIN AND WHICH WOULD TIE DOWN SOVIET FORCES FOR A LONG TIME.

9. THERE CAN BE NO DOUBT THAT THE SOVIET UNION WILL CONTINUE TO TAKE ACTION IN SUPPORT OF THE REGIME IN KABUL. ADDITIONAL ARMS WILL BE SENT, AND THE NUMBER OF SOVIET ADVISERS WILL INCREASE. IT IS ALSO CONCEIVABLE THAT MOSCOW MAY USE SOVIET TROOPS FROM UZBEKISTAN AND TADCHIKISTAN WHO, WHEN PUT INTO AFGHAN UNIFORMS, WOULD REMAIN UNCONSPICUOUS FROM A PHYSICAL AND A LINGUISTIC POINT OF VIEW. HOWEVER, IT IS DIFFICULT TO ASSESS AT PRESENT WHETHER MOSCOW IS REALLY PREPARED TO ACCEPT THE RISK OF A MILITARY INTERVENTION.
END TEXT.

BEGIN TEXT OF TURKISH PAPER:

AFGHANISTAN

THE GENERAL IMPRESSION AFTER THE COUP IN APRIL 1979 WAS THAT THE NEW REGIME WOULD HAVE A DIFFICULT TIME TAKING ROOT AND THAT THE CONSERVATIVE AND INDEPENDENT CHARACTER OF THE AFGHAN PEOPLE WOULD NOT TAKE EASILY TO THE SOVIET-INCLINED AND COMMUNIST NATURE OF THE REGIME.

THIS FORECAST HAS TURNED OUT TO BE TRUE: FIRST THE NOMADIC TRIBES ALONG THE COUNTRY'S INTERNATIONAL BORDERS REFUSED TO COME UNDER THE RULE OF THE REGIME; THEIR RESISTANCE SPREAD GRADUALLY UNTIL THE FIGHTING BROKE OUT IN HERAT IN MARCH 1979 AND THEN IN KABUL ON 23 JUNE AND OVER THE LAST WEEKEND. DESPITE GOVERNMENT EFFORTS TO EXPLAIN AWAY THIS UNREST AS FOREIGN-INSTIGATED, THE MAIN FORCE BEHIND IT SEEMS TO BE THE DISCORDANCE MENTIONED ABOVE.

IT IS PLAIN THAT IRAN AND PAKISTAN DO NOT VIEW THE AFGHAN REGIME WITH A WARM HEART, AND REGARD IT AS A CONTRADICTION OF THEIR OWN ISLAM-INSPIRED REGIMES. NOTWITHSTANDING, NEITHER COUNTRY IS IN A POSITION TO TAKE ACTION.

PAKISTAN: ECONOMIC CONDITIONS AND HER ISOLATION IN

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RUSBLK/AMEMBASSY KABUL 0021

RUHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 6426

RUHFK/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 0112

RUQHMR/AMEMBASSY TEHRAN 6714

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THE REGION CONSTITUTE DETERMINING FACTORS IN HER ATTITUDE. IT IS TRUE THAT HER NOMAD POPULATION ALONG THE AFGHAN BORDER UNDERTAKE ACTION DIRECTED AT AFGHANISTAN; WITH OR WITHOUT AFGHANISTAN, THIS IS A MAJOR PROBLEM FOR PAKISTAN FOR, TO BRING ORDER AND GOVERNMENT RULE TO THAT REGION, SHE HAS TO RESORT TO AN EXTENSIVE MILITARY OPERATION ALONG THE LONG AND RUGGED BORDER REGION.

IRAN: VARIOUS STATEMENTS BY IRANIAN RELIGIOUS LEADERS CONDEMNING THE PRESSURE BEING EXERCISED ON THEIR COUNTRY- PARTS IN AFGHANISTAN NOTWITHSTANDING, IT IS DIFFICULT TO ENVISAGE MORE SUBSTANTIAL IRANIAN MOVES IN HER PRESENT DAY CONDITIONS.

ALONGSIDE DOMESTIC OPPOSITION TO THE AFGHAN REGIME, VARIOUS GROUPS HAVE BEEN FORMED ABROAD, WHO HAVE DEMONSTRATED IN SOME EUROPEAN COUNTRIES AND IN INDIA. THE MAIN ATTRIBUTE OF OPPOSITION GROUPS AT HOME OR ABROAD, ARMED OR NOT, IS THEIR INDEPENDENT NATURE FROM EACH OTHER, LACK OF CO-ORDINATION AMONG THEM AND THEIR LACK OF LEADERSHIP. THESE SHORTCOMINGS MAKE SUCCESS LESS LIKELY.

THE SOVIET ATTITUDE IN THE FACE OF STRONGER DOMESTIC OPPOSITION IN AFGHANISTAN WILL BE OF SIGNIFICANT WEIGHT THROUGHOUT JUNE THIS YEAR. RUMOURS CONCERNING A POSSIBLE SOVIET INTERVENTION HAVE CIRCULATED IN DIPLOMATIC CIRCLES IN KABUL. AN ARAB AMBASSADOR TOLD HIS TURKISH COUNTERPART THAT TARAKI WENT TO MOSCOW ON 8TH JUNE TO ASK FOR SOVIET TROOPS, AND THAT THE SOVIETS TURNED THIS REQUEST DOWN, ONLY REASSURING THE AFGHAN LEADER THAT ECONOMIC AID WILL CONTINUE. THE CLAUSE IN THE TWO COUNTRIES' FRIENDSHIP TREATY PROVIDING FOR THE EXPEDITION OF SOVIET TROOPS WAS INSERED AS A RESULT OF AN AFGHAN REQUEST. IT IS OBVIOUS THAT THE SOVIET LEADERS SEE THIS AS A LAST RESORT, AND

EVEN THEN WOULD HAVE TO WEIGH THE SITUATION VERY CAREFULLY, BEARING IN MIND THE FOLLOWING CONSIDERATIONS:

- SUCH A STEP COULD LEAD CHINA-PAKISTAN-IRAN AND THE USA TO CLOSE RANYS.

- THE SOVIETS COULD THUS END UP PLAYING INTO CHINESE HANDS.

- THE SOVIETS COULD BE DIRECTLY CONFRONTED WITH THE AFGHAN PEOPLE, IN A VIETNAM-TYPE ADVENTURE.

IN THE CASE OF A FURTHER DETERIORATION IN TARAKI'S POSITION, THE SOVIET'S COULD HOWEVER PROCEED TO A RESHUFFLE OF THE AFGHAN MARXISTS, THUS TRYING TO RETAIN A SYMPATHETIC APPEARANCE. THIS SEEMS TO BE A STRONGER POSSIBILITY. THEY MAY, FOR INSTANCE, THINK ABOUT INSTALLING SOMEBODY ELSE BELONGING TO TARAKI'S PEOPLE'S PARTY (KHALQ PARTY), OR EVEN ABOUT SUBSTITUTING THE PERCEM PARTY, PREVIOUSLY OUSTED BY KHALQ PARTY. WHETHER OR NOT THESE COULD BE ACHIEVED WITHOUT BLOODSHED IS DIFFICULT TO FORESEE. ALSO IF A POWER STRUGGLE AMONG THE MARXISTS WERE TO TAKE PLACE THIS COULD OFFER THE OPPONENTS OF THE REGIME GOOD PROSPECTS.

INDICATIONS THAT THE EASTERN COUNTRIES ARE NOT ALL THAT HAPPY WITH TARAKI HAVE ALREADY STARTED TO SURFACE. IN THIS CONTEXT, THE FOLLOWING REMARKS MADE TO THE TURKISH AMBASSADOR BY THE GDR AND THE NEWLY-ARRIVED VIETNAMESE AMBASSADORS, ARE ILLUMINATING:

(GDR) THE REASONS FOR THE REGIME'S DIFFICULTIES LIE IN THE STRING OF MISTAKES MADE. IN THE FACE OF THE COUNTRY-WIDE RESISTANCE AGAINST THE REGIME, THERE IS NO MORE ROOM FOR NEW MISTAKES. THE LEADERS HAVE TO BE VERY WARY FROM NOW ON. THE FIRST WRONG STEP WILL, JUST AS IN CHESS, COST THEM THE GAME. THOSE WHO RESIST ARE PUT UNDER ARREST WITHOUT ANY DISCRIMINATION FOR CHILDREN AND WOMEN. EVERYBODY KNOWS THAT THIS CANNOT MORE. ALL THE SAME, SOVIET SUPPORT SEEMS TO CONTINUE. PERHAPS IN A SHORT WHILE, INTERNALLY AND IN PARTICULAR FROM THE PARTY ITSELF, SOME ALTERNATIVES COULD APPEAR.

(THE VIETNAMESE) "DESPITE MY RECENT ARRIVAL, IT IS NOT DIFFICULT TO OBSERVE THE INTERNAL CRISIS. THIS STEMS FROM THE DISTANCE SEPARATING THE LEADERS AND THE POPULATION, THE TIGHT LINE ADOPTED VIS-A-VIS THE REBELS AND FINALLY REFORMS BEING MADE WITHOUT THE NECESSARY PRECAUTIONS. THESE MAY ALSO BE THE REASON BEHIND THE LATEST GOVERNMENT RESHUFFLE.

AFGHANISTAN'S RELATIONS WITH THE WESTERN COUNTRIES CANNOT BE SAID TO BE GOOD. ALTHOUGH UNTIL A SHORT WHILE

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INFO RUEYK/ALL NATO CAPITALS

RUSBLK/AMEMBASSY KABUL 3322

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RUEHBAC/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 8113

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AGO, THE LEADERS EMPHASIZED THAT THEY WANTED TO HAVE GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE USA, SINCE THE MURDER OF THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR AND THE FOLLOWING COOLING OF RELATIONS, THEY HAVE, IN THEIR PUBLIC STATEMENTS, TENDED TO NAME FRANCE, THE UK AND THE USA FIRST AMONG THE COUNTRIES AGAINST THE REGIME.

AFGHAN-IRANIAN RELATIONSHIP CONTINUES TO BE TENSE. ON EVERY OCCASION, THE AFGHAN SIDE CALLS THE IRANIAN RELIGIOUS LEADERS AS THE REACTIONARY AND VANDALIC LEADERS OF IRAN AND BEHIND EVERY UPRISING LOOK FOR A SHIITE OR IRANIAN FINGER.

THE JULY ISLAMABAD VISIT BY DOST, THE AFGHAN DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER, CONSTITUTED AN OPENER FOR A DIALOGUE WITH PAKISTAN. PAKISTANI AUTHORITIES STRESSED TO THE TURKISH EMBASSY THEIR IMPRESSION THAT DOST DID NOT HAVE MUCH AUTHORITY AND THAT HE DID NOT COMMIT HIMSELF TO ANYTHING DURING THE VISIT. NEVERTHELESS, IT WAS ONLY AFTER THIS VISIT THAT THE POSSIBILITY OF A VISIT BY THE PAKISTAN FOREIGN POLICY ADVISER, MR. AQHA-SHANI, IN PREPARATION FOR A SUMMIT BETWEEN TARAKI AND GENERAL ZIA, APPEARED.

END TEXT.

BEGIN TEXT OF UK PAPER:

AFGHANISTAN

1. RECENT REPORTS DEMONSTRATE THAT THE TARAKI REGIME'S ABILITY TO KEEP CONTROL IS INCREASINGLY DEPENDENT ON SOVIET MILITARY SUPPORT. THE MAINTENANCE OF A FRIENDLY AND CO-OPERATIVE GOVERNMENT IN AFGHANISTAN IS MUCH MORE IMPORTANT TO THE SOVIET UNION THAN THE MAINTENANCE OF TARAKI AND AMIN. BUT WE SHOULD NOT UNDERESTIMATE THE SOVIET COMMIT-

MENT TO THE "AFGHAN REVOLUTION" AS SUCH.

2. THE RUSSIANS HAVE INVESTED MUCH IN THE PROPOSITION THAT THERE HAS BEEN A REVOLUTION IN AFGHANISTAN, THAT IT REPRESENTS A MAJOR GAIN FOR THE AFGHAN PEOPLE AND THAT IT CONFERS A "QUALITATIVELY NEW CHARACTER" ON SOVIET/AFGHAN RELATIONS. IF A SUCCESSOR REGIME WERE TO DISAVOW THE REVOLUTION, THE RUSSIANS WOULD SEE THIS AS A SET-BACK, WHETHER OR NOT AFGHANISTAN REMAINED IN PRACTICE LARGELY DEPENDENT ON THE SOVIET UNION. THEY WOULD BE THE MORE CONCERNED IF THEY HAD REASON TO FEAR AN ANTI-SOVIET BACKLASH.

3. IF THERE IS NO ALTERNATIVE TO PARAKI AND AMIN WHICH IS LIKELY TO PROVE VIABLE AND TO PAY AT LEAST THE SERVICE TO REVOLUTIONARY CONTINUITY, THE RUSSIANS WILL GO TO CONSIDERABLE LENGTHS TO PRESERVE THE PRESENT REGIME. THE DISADVANTAGES OF DIRECT MILITARY INTERVENTION, IN THE SENSE OF LARGE NUMBERS OF SOVIET TROOPS OPERATING DIRECTLY AND VISIBLY UNDER SOVIET COMMAND, ARE MANY AND THE RUSSIANS ARE UNLIKELY TO CONSIDER IT EXCEPT AS A LAST RESORT. THE PROBABLE SOVIET PREFERENCE, AND THE ONE FOR WHICH THERE IS INCREASING EVIDENCE IS TO FURTHER STRENGTHEN THE SOVIET MILITARY PRESENCE IN AFGHANISTAN, MORE ESPECIALLY IN SO FAR AS A DETERIORATING INTERNAL SITUATION CAN BE BLAMED ON KHALQ INTERVENTION AND IT CAN BE ARGUED THAT THERE IS A THREAT TO THE "SECURITY, INDEPENDENCE AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY" OF AFGHANISTAN WITHIN THE TERMS OF ARTICLE 4 OF THE SOVIET/AFGHAN TREATY.

4. THE RUSSIANS HAVE REACHED OUT IN AFGHANISTAN FOR MORE THAN THEY REALLY NEED, BUT ARE NOW IN A POSITION WHERE THEY CANNOT EASILY RETREAT WITHOUT CONSIDERABLE LOSS OF FACE AND THE POSSIBILITY OF MORE SERIOUS DAMAGE TO THEIR INTERESTS.

5. SUBJECT TO THE ABOVE, THERE IS SOME EVIDENCE THAT THE RUSSIANS WOULD LIKE TO SWITCH HORSES, IF AN ALTERNATIVE TO PARAKI AND AMIN WERE AVAILABLE. THE PROBLEM IS THAT ANY ALTERNATIVE SET OF LEADERS WOULD FIND IT DIFFICULT TO ESTABLISH A POPULAR BASE UNLESS THEY COULD DEMONSTRATE THAT THEY WERE SUBSTANTIALLY MORE INDEPENDENT OF THE RUSSIANS THAN PARAKI AND AMIN. EVEN WERE THE RUSSIANS PREPARED TO CONTEMPLATE ALLOWING A SUCCESSOR REGIME A LOOSER REIN, THERE IS NO POLITICAL GROUPING AVAILABLE TO TAKE ON THE ROLE. A MILITARY REGIME MIGHT BE AN ALTERNATIVE. THE ARMY MIGHT BE SEEN BY THE POPULATION AT LARGE AS BEING SUFFICIENTLY DISTINGUISHABLE FROM THE KHALQ NOT TO BE TARNISHED WITH THE SAME BRUSH. FOR THEIR PART THE RUSSIANS

MIGHT BE SATISFIED THAT THE LARGE NUMBER OF OFFICERS WITH
TRAINING IN THE SOVIET UNION WOULD INSURE THE CONTINUATION
OF THEIR INFLUENCE. HOWEVER, ALTHOUGH IT MIGHT BE RELAT-
IVELY EASY FOR THE RUSSIANS TO ENGINEER A COUP, THERE
IS GOOD REASON TO DOUBT WHETHER THE CALIBRE AND RELIA-
BILITY OF THE ARMY ARE SUFFICIENT TO BEAR THE ADDITIONAL

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INFO RUTREE/ALL NATO CAPITALS

RUSBLK/AMEMBASSY KABUL 0323

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INCREASE IN RESPONSIBILITY.

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